

## Message Text

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15

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 /058 W

----- 091603

R 171800Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 850

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USCINCEUR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, MILT, SP

SUBJ: POLITIZATION OF ARMED FORCES

REF: MADRID 0076

1. IN PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING JAN 10, INFORMATION MINISTER LEON HERRERA ESTEBAN TOOK PAINS TO CLARIFY INTENT OF STATEMENTS BY THREE ARMED FORCES MINISTERS REPORTED REFTEL.

2. HERRERA SAID SPEECHES HAD AROUSED MUCH COMMENT IN SPAIN AND ABROAD. IN CONNECTION WITH INTERPRETATION THAT THEY SHOWED LACK OF UNITY IN ARMED FORCES, HERRERA SAID THERE WAS NO LACK OF UNITY. "I CAN TELL YOU THAT THE SPEECHES OF THREE MINISTERS REVEALED COORDIANATED POSITION AND WERE WRITTEN TO SHOW SOLDIER WHAT HIS ROLE IN IS POLITICS AT TIME WHEN POLITICS ARE BEING OPENED FOR ALL SPANIARDS. SOLDIER SHOULD DEVOTE HIMSELF EXCLUSIVELY TO MILITARY MATTERS. IF HE WANTS TO DEVOTE HIMSELF TO POLITICS, HE CAN DO SO BUT MUST TEMPORARILY LEAVE ARMY. WHILE ON ACTIVE

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SERVICE, HE MUST STAY COMPLETELY OUT OF POLITICS."

3. HERRERA WENT ON TO ADD THAT STATEMENTS WERE NOT INTENDED TO IMPOSE ABSOLUTE BAN AGAINST ANY MILITARY PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS, NOTING THAT HE HIMSELF WAS PROFESSIONAL MILITARY MAN WHO HAD SEPARATED HIMSELF FROM THE ARMY WHILE OCCUPYING POLITICAL POSITION.

4. NAVY MINISTER PITA DA VEIGA MADE FURTHER PRONOUNCEMENT REGARDING LAW OF ASSOCIATIONS IN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN "DIARIO DE CADIZ". ACCORDING TO PRESS, DA VEIGA SAID "LAW OF ASSOCIATIONS IS DECIDED AND VALIENT STEP FORWARD. IT IS SIMPLY A FURTHER PERFECTION OF FUNDAMENTAL LAWS AND I BELIEVE ITS OWN DEVELOPMENT DEPENDS MORE ON SPANISH THEMSELVES THAN GOVERNMENT."

5. COMMENT: EMBASSY BELIEVES HERRERA'S EXPLANATION IS CORRECT ONE AND WE WOUWD THEREFORE REGARD AS SUSPECT ANY SPECULATION THAT MINISTERS' STATEMENTS MEANT ANYTHING OTHER THAN CAUTION TO ACTIVE MEMBERS OF MILITARY SERVICES THAT POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS WERE NOT FOR THEM. TIMING WOULD APPEAR LOGICAL, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, THERE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN SOME EFFORT TO MAKE THIS CLEAR IN VIEW OF SPECULATION THAT SPAIN'S ASSOCIATION OF VETERANS MIGHT ATTEMPT TO FORM POLITICAL ASSOCIATION ALTHOUGH THIS POSSIBILITY NOW APPEARS MORIBUND.

6. WE HAVE NOTED GENUINE IRRITATION HERE THAT STATEMENTS WERE NOT ACCEPTED AT FACE VALUE AND GAVE RISE TO SPECULATIONS THAT THERE WAS RESTIVENESS AMONG SO-CALLED YOUNG TURK OFFICERS IN SPANISH MILITARY A LA PORTUGAL. WE HAVE SEEN NO SOLID EVIDENCE OF IT, DESPITE OCCASIONAL INCLINATIONS BY PRESS EXILE OPPOSITION AND SOME MEMBERS OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS, ENCOURAGED BY COMPARISONS WITH PORTUGUESE SITUATION AND WISHFUL THINKING TO TALK OF FIRE WHERE THERE IS NO SIGN OF SMOKE.

7. AS FAR AS MILITARY ATTITUDES TOWARD ASSOCIATIONS IS CONCERNED, WE BELIEVE THEY CAN GENERALLY BE CHARACTERIZED AS SKEPTICAL AND DUBIOUS, PARTICULARLY AMONG SENIOR OFFICERS, DESPITE PITA DA VEIGA'S POSITIVE PUBLIC REACTION. THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MILITARY ARE NOT NECESSARILY OPPOSED. THEY JUST DOUBT THAT ASSOCIATIONS WILL REALLY AMOUNT TO MUCH. DATT CONCURS IN FOREGOING.  
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## Message Attributes

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